

## **VI. Disruption Begins**

We may conclude this chapter by presenting the developments on the organisational plan.

It would be recalled that the "composite Secretariat", formed in April, was more or less evenly-balanced. The "right", the "left" and those who were then unattached to either were represented on it and hence it collectively represented the will of the NC and of the Party. Furthermore, the first five-and-a-half-months of the functioning of the composite Secretariat was, in a way satisfactory to all concerned.

This, however, was completely upset at the meeting of the Central Secretariat held in the middle of October. The Statement, issued by the Secretariat, completely exposed the actual division within the Secretariat. The General Secretary and the Chairman gave different interpretations to the papers next day. Full advantage was taken of this situation by the enemies of the Party to mount a full-scale offensive against the Party as a whole, particularly against the so-called "Pro-China" section.

The situation inside the Secretariat deteriorated fast. Within twelve hours of the publication of the Secretariat statement, three members of the Secretariat (Yogindra Sharma, M. N. Govindan Nair and Dr. Ahmed) of the Secretariat jointly asked the General Secretary to issue "an explanation" of the Secretariat statement along the lines indicated by them. When this was rejected by him and another member of the Secretariat (Bhupesh Gupta) who said that differences in interpretation could be resolved only by a plenary meeting of the Secretariat, the three of them threatened to issue their own statement.

This was followed by two developments which showed that these comrades had started functioning as a separate faction in the Secretariat and that their faction included the Chairman, Dange, as well.

(a) Dange issued from Delhi a statement "explaining" the Secretariat statement. This was done without the knowledge of either the General Secretary or Bhupesh Gupta but in consultation with the other three.

(b) The whole report of the discussion between the General Secretary and Bhupesh Gupta on the one hand and the other three members of the Secretariat on the other appeared in the LINK. There was sufficient internal evidence to show that it was given out by one of the three.

Not only was Dange's statement issued behind the backs of the General Secretary and Bhupesh Gupta, but it was in content directed against the so-called "pro-China" section of the Party. It was obviously meant to incite the rank and file members of the Party and the people against a section of the leadership of the National Council with whom the Dange group had so far been obliged to make organisational compromises. Dange and his colleagues obviously felt the inner-Party situation to have become sufficiently ripe for them to try to isolate their opponents in the Party leadership by denouncing them as "pro-China". The October 19th statement issued by the four members of the Secretariat was thus the first shot openly fired by them in the factional struggle which they were bent on launching.

Fortunately for them, their salvos against their opponents in the inner-Party struggle coincided with the developments on the border with Chinese troops crossing the McMahon Line. It was in this tense atmosphere that a series of statements came to be issued by large number of state, district and local units of the Party. While all of them denounced the Chinese, a few of them also denounced the so-called "pro-Chinese elements" in the Party. An atmosphere of real hysteria was thus worked up against a section of the Party leadership.

This whole procedure, it is obvious, was indefensible from the point of view of correct norms of Party organisation. For, here was a grave situation of an all-India character in which, according to the explicit provisions of the Party Constitution, the Party's viewpoint should be expressed only by the National Council after it collectively discussed it. This, however, was not acceptable to a section of the Central Secretariat (which, being only four out of nine was in a minority in the Secretariat). It, therefore, took on its shoulders the responsibility of giving a lead to the entire Party in such a way as to divide it from top to



bottom into a majority and a minority. The game obviously was to create such a situation that, when the National Council ultimately sat to discuss it, there was no possibility of that calm discussion of the issues involved, which was demanded of the situation if the Party was to work out a correct political line and unify the Party on its basis. This, therefore, amounted to the imposition of a line of a section of the Party on the entire Party without even a pretence of democratic inner-Party discussion.

The description of the situation of the Party leadership would be incomplete without mention of the fact that, between Dange's statement and the actual meeting of the National Council, the Secretariat and the CEC belonging to the Dange group and residing in Delhi functioned as a faction within the central office and demanded of the General Secretary that he should function according to their suggestions since, they claimed, they represented the majority of the National Council. When it was pointed out to them that all this was contrary to the principles embodied in the organisational resolution adopted at Hyderabad, they replied "what are involved here are correct politics; organisation should be subordinated to the implementation of correct politics."

Naturally, therefore, the meeting of the National Council which adopted the Dange-sponsored resolution on Chinese aggression registered the break-up of the inner-Party arrangement made in the earlier (April) meeting. Three members of the Secretariat resigned their positions in the Secretariat. They, in their letters of resignation, stated that it was impossible to have any frank discussions in the Secretariat in view of the fact that every discussion in the Secretariat was systematically being leaked to the bourgeois press, thus making it impossible to function in the Secretariat. The General Secretary and Bhupesh Gupta also requested the National Council to relieve them of their posts, but did not press their requests for resignation. When the majority decided to reject their request, they agreed to continue. It was, however, clear that the composite Secretariat that had been created at the April meeting had now got completely shattered.

The stand taken by the majority of the National Council on the large-scale military conflict in the November 1962 resolution was the logical outcome of their revisionist and class collaborationist outlook.

The consequences which followed the adoption of this resolution have been disastrous. The Party became in every sense of the term a tail of the Government of India—a tail of even such reactionary forces as the Jan Sangh and Swatantra Party. The type of jingoist propaganda that was let loose by the Party was not indulged in even by these reactionary parties. The Government of India was presented by these leaders as the paragon of all virtues. It was not for nothing that the Government of India circulated throughout the world through its embassies the speeches made by some Party leaders in Parliament on the border hostilities.

Is it any wonder, then, that in the CEC meeting of December 1962, many members characterised the cease-fire proposals of November 21, as "treacherous" and "diabolical" and demanded its outright rejection? It should be remembered that the Chinese had unilaterally ceased fire and started withdrawal. What did these people want? Did they want that the Indian army should pursue the withdrawing Chinese forces and continue the war across the McMahon Line and Aksai Chin across the Karakoram mountains? Perhaps they were afraid that when the Chinese withdrew and the armed conflict ceased, the ground under their jingoist propaganda would be cut! It is no wonder the resolution of the Executive Committee stated that the fact the Chinese army had come up to Foothills in NEFA before withdrawing showed that the Chinese were after the tea gardens and oil fields of Assam. Even the Jan Sangh and Swatantra Parties did not indulge in this kind of propaganda.

Even after the Colombo Conference and the visit of its representatives to Delhi, the CEC did not give its opinion on these proposals. It was only after the Government of India accepted them and insisted on their acceptance by China 'in toto' that the CEC passed a resolution fully supporting the Government of India's stand!



In fact, a cursory review of the central and state party organs will show that the stuff produced by them is more anti-China than anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly or anti-reaction. In this they have surpassed the parties of right reaction.

Naturally this tailing behind the bourgeoisie reflected itself in the mass movement. Dange, as the General Secretary of the AITUC, immediately wrote to the Labour Minister offering 'industrial truce' and asked that the tripartite committee be convened forthwith. The conference was held on November 3, 1962. And Dange committed the working class to no strike action, however ferocious might be the attacks from the employers. Remember, all this was done without any consultation with the trade unions. And after having agreed to the truce, he presented it as a 'fait accompli' to the General Council of the AITUC, a fortnight later.

And this was justified in the name of the declaration of National Emergency and defence. Mr. Dange stated in the National Council: "The National Emergency, of course, means that most of the ordinary constitutional rights are also suspended. Only one thing has not been suspended which under such conditions generally becomes the first casualty, and that is, Parliament. It still functions. In spite of conditions of war and declaration of National Emergency, Parliament did meet and did have deliberations".

Are we to support Dange? Even at the height of the second world war when Hitler's Luftwaffe was bombing London and throughout the second world war, the British Parliament functioned. To such an extent had the Dange group fallen that they even praise the Government of India for not suspending Parliament when a border conflict broke out!

He made it very clear that the industrial truce as far as the workers are concerned was unconditional. He stated in the Council: "I unconditionally support my obligation but at the same time request others to accept theirs". What if the bourgeoisie does not accept the obligations? Dange has his apologia for that, too. He says: "After all, it is the bourgeoisie. The question of national obligation is more fundamental and real

to exploited classes than to the exploiters. In conditions of war the working class, the peasantry and the middle classes behave differently from the established exploiting classes. We do not lay down conditions for defending our country because the country belongs to the people".

When the workers were thus handed over to the bourgeoisie, tied hand and foot, the employers made merry of the Emergency, increased their rate of exploitation, made more profits out of overtime and Sunday-work; refused even to share the gains of the overtime work done by the workers and resorted to dismissals, victimisation and other anti-trade union activities. The review of the working of the industrial truce resolution by the Government of India itself listed hundreds of cases of the employers flouting their obligations.

Dange in a "brilliant and fighting speech" according to his Assistant Secretary Satish Loomba, in the 21st Indian Labour Conference, stated: "What were the main items on which the working class was called upon to do its duty? Contributions to NDF? We paid. The AITUC unions collected huge sums. We worked on Sundays and overtime. Strikes and stoppages? Figures collected and placed before the conference by the Ministry of Labour show that this was the most peaceful period in India's history. Figures also show how production increased and how productivity increased. That is the story of the working class."

What is the story of the employing class and the States and Central Government? Was it a very happy feature that in the period of emergency prices were rising, real wages falling and Government was totally unable to check them? And when wages were falling the Government says 'save more'.

And what use is this 'fighting speech' when actually no fight was waged when the workers were attacked, when wages were repressed. This was sheer betrayal of the working class, abandonment of the struggle to defend the class and masses.

But the workers did not take it lying down and there were hundreds of cases where this advice of AITUC leaders was disregarded. They went on strikes against unbearable burdens. And when Government resorted to severe repression on the



striking workers by arresting and detaining hundreds of them or even resorting to firing, Dange's AITUC-Communist leadership kept quiet. We mention here some of the most glaring examples of the Dange group's betrayal of the workers and abject surrender to the bourgeoisie.

In Goa, when all negotiations with the port authorities had totally failed, the workers went on strike on the simple demand that they should have the same facilities as the workers in other major ports like Bombay and Madras. After a few days, when the Government found that they could not break the strike, Mr. Nanda requested Mr. Dange over the telephone to get the strike withdrawn. Dange readily agreed to oblige and without even caring to ascertain what the facts of the case were, asked the union leaders over the trunk phone to immediately withdraw the strike unconditionally. The union leaders refused. After thousands of leaders and militant striking workers were detained under the Defence of India Rules. When ultimately the Government found itself unable to break the strike despite all its repressive direct negotiations were entered into by the port authorities and the strike was settled on the satisfaction of the major demands of the workers.

In Coimbatore, as many as twenty-one strikes took place in the textile mills within a short period of three months and the AITUC union simply stood by. Many such instances could be given from every state.

At the height of the preparations by the HMS unions for the general strike in Bombay in August 1963, against rising prices and the cost of living index fraud, Dange wrote a letter to the workers that they must postpone the strike and give time to the Government to implement their promise to have 'fair price shops' opened in every industrial establishment employing fifty or more workers. It should be noted that the Government later repudiated its undertaking and stated that no such undertaking was given. This gratuitous advice was naturally spurned by the HMS leaders and workers and the tempo for the general strike mounted with the heroic strike of the municipal workers. Only when Dange found that his efforts to sabotage the general strike had failed and

that his position was going to be seriously undermined, did he, at the last moment, give a formal call on behalf of the AITUC unions to support the general strike. It is noteworthy that he was nowhere in the picture. However, seeking to hide his shameless role of a saboteur, he later on tried to appropriate all credit to himself on the basis of the last minute formal call that he gave! In fact, Dange himself boasted that in this period, there had been more strikes by the workers of INTUC unions than those of the AITUC.

If this was the case with regard to the working class, the Dange group did no better with regard to the attacks of the Government on the common people. The U.P. Government had imposed a 25 per cent increase in the land levy which was opposed by all other opposition parties of the state and even by some Congressmen. It was left to Dr. Ahmed, a member of the Secretariat of the National Council of the CPI, to give his full-throated and whole-hearted support to this attack on the peasantry and declare that those who oppose this taxation are traitors to the country. March 1963 saw the imposition of the heaviest burdens on the people when the budgets of the Central and State Governments were passed. It imposed new taxation to the tune of over Rs. 250 crores. And what was the attitude of the Communist Party in Parliament? Under instructions from the Secretariat, the Communist Party in Parliament remained neutral in the voting on the Finance Bill imposing the heavy taxation.

A resolution moved by Comrade A. K. Gopalan calling on the Party to lead the people in a campaign against these tax burdens was rejected on the ground that the Party which supported defence cannot at the same time oppose taxation measures to strengthen defence. Many leaders of the Party went about supporting the Compulsory Deposit Scheme and even the Gold Control Order. And when Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari was going to the USA and Britain for begging arms aid, the Communist leader in Parliament, Hiren Mukerjee, wished him 'bon voyage'.

A systematic campaign was unleashed through the bourgeois press that those who opposed Dange's resolution in the National Council and who had supported the resolution of either Comrade



P. Ramamurti or of Comrade E. M. S. were pro-Chinese. This was at a time when the bourgeois press and anti-Communist parties were carrying on a systematic campaign to the same effect. The public statements issued by several members and units of the Party who joined this chorus of bourgeois propaganda amounted to giving an alibi to Communist-baiters like the Jan Sangh, PSP and Swatantra Party as well as to the Government to launch their attack on the Party.

Is it, therefore, surprising that the supporters of the National Council did not react at all when the Government on November 7, struck the first blow in Maharashtra, where this vilification campaign had reached the highest pitch? The arrests of the so-called "pro-China elements" in Maharashtra was the first action of the Government to find out the extent of support it could get. Dange did his best to prevent the resolution condemning these arrests and demanding their release being passed by either the CEC or the General Council of the AITUC which met ten days later. Having satisfied itself that it could not only have the support of right reaction and the bulk of the Congress but also the support of people like Dange in the Communist Party, the Government was emboldened to launch the countrywide attack on November 21. Even this, however, failed to wake up these people, they conducted no mass campaign to force the Government to retrace these steps. Every real Communist will feel ashamed that the protest against Government's policy came not from the Indian Party leadership but from our fraternal parties abroad. Even after fraternal parties had repeatedly protested, the Dange group who was then in the leadership refused to launch a mass campaign against repression. This was perhaps the first instance in the history of any Communist Party that the leadership refused to launch a protest campaign when a section of the Party was attacked by the Government.

Not only did they launch any campaign for release but they actually abetted the Government in this repression. Many a memorandum submitted by the state leadership was an invitation to the Government to continue to keep the opponents of Dange's political line in detention. Many State Committees gave mandates

to those in jail to give undertakings to the Government. Although some of the supporters of Dange who were also in the initial stages detained gave such undertakings, the vast majority of the comrades refused to abase their self-respect by giving such undertakings. One of Dange's followers went to the extent of writing to Government from jail that he not only fully supported the National Council resolution but in his unit, had moved a resolution demanding that Comrade B.T. Ranadive should be expelled from the Party! The Secretary of the Tamilnad State Committee ordered the district units to remove the posters they had exhibited in public condemning the detentions and demanding the release of all those detained. When Comrade E. M. S., as editor of NEW AGE weekly, had written an editorial in January 1963, in which he had demanded the release of the detained comrades, the two other members of the Editorial Board, by a majority decision, deleted the paras relating to the detention and demand for release.

Dange, in a public speech in Tiruchirapalli, six months after the arrests, openly declared that the defence fund collections in the Golden Rock Workshop and Tiruchi had been sabotaged by the leaders of the trade union. This was an obvious reference to Comrades K. A. Nambiar and Umanath—who were then in jail. The fact was that both these comrades were in Delhi immediately after the armed border clashes began, attending Parliament and there was no truth whatever in the allegation of Dange. It was obvious Dange was asking the Madras Government not to release these comrades.

In June 1963, when Dange attended a meeting of the TUC in Hyderabad, the workers demanded, that the leadership should take effective steps to get the detained comrades released. He got angry at this and shouted, "Heavens will not fall if these 'mahatmas' are in jail". It is noteworthy that the Bombay Committee, under the personal guidance of Dange, suspended some comrades for shouting during the "Great March" in Delhi, "B. T. Ranadive Zindabad".

When Mr. Krishna Menon was removed from the Cabinet, these patriots were bewildered. They could not see the simple and



living connection between the anti-Communist hysteria worked up by right reaction leading up to its campaign for the removal of crypto Communist and the Government's surrender to it. Their 'patriotism' took them to such abject surrender to the bourgeoisie that they welcomed imperialist military aid. In doing this, they forgot the elementary lesson drawn by the international Communist movement that an attack on the Communist movement was the inevitable accompaniment of imperialist aid. They, therefore, could not see the connection between the arrival of the UK-USA military mission and the countrywide arrests of our comrades. Thus, they shamelessly accepted the claim of the Government that these arrests were not directed against the entire Party. Thereby, without any sense of shame, they renounced the position accepted by the world Communist movement namely, attack on Communists is the main weapon used by reactionaries all over the world.

It must be realised that all this took place after the border clashes had ended. The Communist Party did not even ask for the lifting of the Emergency for six long months. On the other hand, many of them had publicly opposed the demand made by other opposition parties for lifting the state of emergency. In June 1963, when the National Council could no longer evade the issue and had to adopt a resolution on the question, it did not categorically demand the withdrawal of the emergency, but requested the Government to review the question of the necessity of continuing the emergency in consultation with opposition parties. It is noteworthy, however, that within two days of the adoption of this resolution, when the General Council of the AITUC met, Dange made a statement that in his opinion, the emergency should continue!

When by-elections were announced, the Central Secretariat gave a directive to the Party units that where the Party could not be sure of its own success, it should not put up its candidates, but support Congress candidates as against other reactionary parties. It is obvious that in no constituency had the Party 100 per cent chances of winning. The Secretariat directive, therefore, amounted to virtually asking the units to support the Congress

Party in the by-elections and it was so interpreted by the Party units without any intervention by the Secretariat. In the by-elections to Parliament from Amroha, Rajkot and Farukhabad constituency from where the Socialist leader Dr. Lohia and not any member of a reactionary party contested, the Communist Party threw its whole weight in favour of Congress candidates. In Tamilnad, in all the three by-elections that took place, the Communist Party threw its whole weight in favour of the Congress candidates. It did not matter as to who the opposing candidate was. Even against an independent candidate who had refused to join the Swatantra or the DMK, the Party supported the Congress candidate.

In Kerala, the State Secretary issued a statement after discussion in the State Council on three by-elections. In that statement, he made it clear that the Communist Party would go in for adjustments of seats in the three by-elections with the Congress Party. He further stated in the statement that it was necessary to support the Congress party in order to safeguard 'non-alignment, planned development and socialism'! If this line could not be implemented, it was not because of lack of efforts by the leadership of the Party in Kerala. Events so developed that it could not be implemented. And the fact remains that it was in Kerala that the Party won one of the by-elections—precisely in the seat which the Dangeites wanted to give to the Congress in the name of defeating the PSP. Thus, complete lining up behind the Congress party had become the general line of the Dange group. The Vijayawada Party Congress line was thrown completely overboard.

But the people moved. They expressed their resentment and anger against the Congress Government, which utilised the emergency for fattening big business, speculators, hoarders and landlords and threw unbearable burdens on the common people, by defeating the Congress candidates in the Parliamentary by-elections, despite the Communist Party's support to the Congress. In the absence of a Communist Party resolutely fighting against these anti-people policies of the Government and face of its support to the Congress, people had no other choice



before them but to express their resentment by voting for whoever stood against the Congress. Thus, in practice, the Communist Party's line was throwing the people into the hands of Right reaction, strengthening Right reaction in the country. How worthless was the Dange group's claim that they were fighting Right reaction?

The by-election results gave a great shock to the Dange group. They had to wake up. The Congress Government's attacks on the people had led to people losing confidence in it. In great haste they gave notice of resolution of no-confidence to be moved in Parliament.

Later on, they wanted to riggle out of this and what acrobatic they had to perform! In Parliament, they knew that with the support of the Communist MPs alone they could not get the leave of the House to discuss their resolution. Even then, they deliberately did not approach any party or individual for support.

Their aim was thus clear. They wanted to tell the people that they had moved the no-confidence but at the same time, they did not mobilise enough support to have the motion discussed. Unfortunately for them, there was another resolution of no-confidence moved by Acharya Kripalani which was taken up for discussion. The Communist Party was embarrassed. It did not know what to do. A way was found by moving an amendment asking for the resignation of two Ministers, namely S. K. Patil and Morarji Desai. In the speeches, no attack was launched on the policy of continuing the emergency and DIR, misuse and the anti-people policies of the Government as a whole. No attack was launched for the Government's gradual emasculating the policy of non-alignment. Instead, fire was concentrated on two Ministers who were supposed to be the villains of the piece.

Again, sensing the popular mood, they decided to organise the "Great March". It was an attempt to shore up the sagging influence of the Party among the people who had begun to look upon it as an appendage of the Congress. It is significant that the campaign for signature, most of the leaders of the Party made it clear that this campaign was not directed against the

Government but it was intended to strengthen Nehru's hands as if Nehru had nothing to do with these policies and he was just a prisoner in some reactionaries' camp. It should also be remembered that Dange refused to include the demand for the release of Communists in the "Great Petition".

Despite all this, when the comrades, after months of inactivity, got the opportunity to move the people against the Government, they worked enthusiastically. Facts show that it was particularly those units of the Party which were opposed to the political line of the Dange group, that were most active in the campaign for the Great March. Despite this, however, Dange went on accusing them of sabotaging the campaign.

After the "Great March", instead of drawing the correct lesson that people rallied to the march to express their anger against their fast deteriorating conditions and that the Party had to consistently lead this discontent of the people and fight against the Government policies, Dange sought to draw the conclusion that the "Great March" was a vindication of his entire policies. With such an understanding, naturally, for months afterwards there was no sincere follow-up of the "Great March" or any serious attempt to fight to defend the interests of the masses.

Finding that his position was getting seriously undermined, Dange indulged in demagoguery and gave from time to time slogans like "Bharat Bandh" which were never seriously meant. In the end of December, he convened an all-India conference of trade unions in Bombay. At the fraction meeting, it was decided that the time was ripe to make serious preparations for an all-India strike on the issue of prices and other pressing demands. But, it should be emphasised that this again was not seriously meant. For, when Comrade P. Ramamurti proposed that all well-known leaders of the AITUC must tour the country, visit important trade union centres and carry on a mass campaign for the strike and help the state and local comrades in preparing for the strike, the proposal was turned down. Instead, Dange promised some pamphlets to help the campaign. Needless to say, no pamphlet came out.



Again when he suggested that in view of the uneven development of the trade union movement and tempo of struggles, states where the tempo of the workers develops, they should be encouraged to call statewide strikes without waiting for the all-India strike and that such strikes would generate enthusiasm and encouragement to workers in other states, Dange stoutly opposed the suggestion and said that no state should go on strike before the all-India strike. It is obvious that by his opposition, the rising tempo in different states was sought to be drowned in frustration.

When one delegate at the conference suggested that guarantees must be forged in the states by the calling of state conventions and setting up committees for the preparation of general strike, not only did Dange turn the suggestion down, but fell foul on the delegate. In the three months following the conference, the largest number of leading comrades of the AITUC were sent abroad in various delegations. This is the clearest proof of the fact that the call for the preparation for the general strike was never seriously meant to be implemented. The Kerala PC had to bow down to the demand of the Party members in the state and agree to an extensive Convention of PCMs, DCMs and representatives of lower committees for the purpose of discussing and planning the general strike on the question of prices and a big campaign on the question of the retrograde amendments sought to be made to the Agrarian Relations Act. The district comrades concerned took to these preparations for the convention enthusiastically and there was extensive and enthusiastic support for the convention. However, just for four days before the date of the convention, the State Secretariat, without giving any reasons whatever, cancelled the convention altogether.

The Tamilnad Council of the Party took this line to its logical conclusion in the municipal elections. It passed a resolution by majority which stated that the Party would seek to enter into electoral adjustments in all municipalities and in respect of all seats with the Congress party for supporting each other. The secretariat of the State Council issued a statement later that even if there was no adjustment, the Communist Party would support

the Congress party wherever it did not itself contest. Although the resolution stated that it was not seeking a general united front with the Congress, anyone could see that this resolution was nothing but such a united front.

When the matter was brought to the notice of the CEC, it refused to pull up the Tamilnad Council but on the other hand, passed a resolution which only underlined the fact that the Tamilnad Council had stated that they did not seek a general united front with the Congress. By refusing to give its opinion on the crux of the problem raised by the resolution, namely seeking adjustments with the Congress in all the constituencies and all the municipalities of the state, the CEC virtually abetted the Tamilnad Council by resorting to sophistry. The Tamilnad leadership took its cue from the Central Secretariat and went whole-hog in tailing behind the Congress. Mr. Kamaraj refused to come to any adjustment in the overwhelming majority of the municipalities. Out of over 50 municipalities, the Congress agreed to come to some arrangement in three municipalities only where its position was very shaky. In Madras, it agreed to give just three out of 100 seats. In Trichy, it agreed to give six out of thirtysix seats and in Tuticorin, four out of 32 seats. And yet, the leadership went all-out supporting the Congress in all the municipalities in all the constituencies where it did not contest. In most of the districts, the Party comrades and units refused to cooperate with the leadership and refused to organise meetings. In Trichy, Tuticorin and Madras, the tricolour and Red Flag were flown together. Kalyanasundaram appealed to the voters in Trichy that they must consider every vote cast to the Congress as a vote cast to the Communist Party ! In Madras, when the local comrades and committees refused to organise meetings for supporting the Congress, the leadership got a platform under the style of "National Progressive Front", with Congress, the rank communal Dravida Kazhagam, the Tamilnad National Party (which has now merged in the Congress). In the name of the 'front', hundreds of meetings were organised during the election and a member of the State Secretariat was invariably one of the main speakers along with the representatives of the Congress



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and other parties. Rabid communal fire was emitted from the platform and the Communist Party representative vied with the others in this rabid communalism. Was it any wonder that the Party lost many seats and became the laughing-stock of the people of Tamilnad ?